

TO: State Senator Tom Casperson and Committee  
FR: Robert "Skip" Schulz, President Upper Peninsula ORV Trail Development Association  
RE: SB 50  
DT: March 21, 2013

My name is Skip Schulz. I am the President of the Upper Peninsula ORV Trail Development Association. I have formed and help form 4 ORV Clubs in the Upper Peninsula, and have been very active in the ORV Sport since 1985. I am also a member of the DNR's Western UP Citizens Advisory Council, was selected to serve on the Snowmobile/ORV Trail Signing Committee and was a member of the ORV Youth Safety Committee for the State of Michigan. I am also a Youth ORV and Snowmobile Safety Instructor. I have spoken at ORV Conventions and ORV Issues in different states across our Country.

While SB 50 is needed throughout the State of Michigan, you have or will hear from other people as to how important this legislation is in their areas and the state. I am here this morning to address the importance of this legislation in the Upper Peninsula.

It was in 1991 that I was a charter member of TRALE-UP, that the concept of developing an Inter-Connecting ORV Trail from one end of the UP to the other began for me. Then when I formed Mi-TRALE in July of 2001, that idea became more of a reality. As years passed, and I attended many meetings throughout the UP, I found out that no matter how hard our ORV Clubs and volunteers worked on developing any form of a connecting ORV Trail System, it simply cannot happen without having the legal right to develop a trail or route using sections of State and Federal Highway Right of Ways, Shoulders, and especially bridges.

The use of specific approved sections of M-Roads became even more important the last 3 years when so many communities wanted a part of the 300 Million Dollars that the ORV Riders bring into the States economy. Just this past month alone, I have met with Iron Mountain and a suburb of Marquette Officials as to what it will take to be a part of the long-planned East-West UP ORV Interstate Trail.

Time and time again, it came down to ORV's not having the legal right to cross a bridge, use a short section of a shoulder or right of way on a State or US Highway. The common comment from County, City, Township officials is... 'you mean ORV's can't do what snowmobilers do?' My answer is simply, 'no, ORV's cannot cross a bridge.'

Can you imagine how limited our impressive Snowmobile Trail System would be if they were under the same rules as ORV's? We sure don't want to curtail the rights of our snowmobiling friends, nor are we even asking for the right to be able to cross any bridge, use any shoulder, or right of way. All this legislation is asking is for the right to cross an M Bridge, use an M Right of Way, or an M Highway shoulder, WHERE NEEDED under very specific guidelines.

You will find those specific guidelines in Section 8, sub-sections A-D.

Even with the economy our Country, State, and especially in the Upper Peninsula, it is the ORV Sport that continues to increase. In the latest Michigan State University Study, our Michigan Citizen ORV Riders now up to spending over \$250.00 a day, while those visiting Michigan are spending over \$450.00/day. Just this past year the DNR has sold over 220,000 ORV Trail Permits and those numbers continue to increase. On a National Level, the numbers and increase is the same.

With the constant increase in what is called Side-by-Sides, our sport's median age is also maturing. We've gone from buying an ORV for utility only purposes to touring purposes. Now 50-75 year old couples are looking at riding their Side by Side for long distances. They want to go from city to city, even state to state. The only way this is going to happen in Michigan is with an inter-connecting ORV Trail System, and the only way we are going to have an inter-connecting trail system is by passing this legislation.

The Governor and our elected officials are promoting Michigan as the "Trail State." One way to make sure we remain and will continue to be the Trail State amongst the biggest consumer-based trail users, ORV Riders, is by having a safe, managed, and enjoyable Inter-connecting ORV Trail System.

Whether it is to get into the community I am sitting in now, Bergland, or to get into Ironwood, Bessemer, Wakefield, Iron Mountain, Marquette, Escanaba, and many points in between, is by passing SB 50. The only way to bring Tourism dollars, and help create Tourism jobs is by allowing ORV Riders legal access to hundreds of communities is by allowing us to ride our ORV's into those communities.

Thank-you for your time, and consideration.

Robert "Skip" Schulz.